

The Superiority of Wisdom

Key Verse: “*Then said I, Wisdom is better than strength: nevertheless the poor man’s wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard.*”
—*Ecclesiastes 9:16*

Selected Scripture:
Ecclesiastes 9:13–10:20

THE KEY VERSE OF TODAY’S

lesson is part of several verses in which the wise man, Solomon, tells the story of a small city and relates it to the lesson of wisdom. (Eccles. 9:14-18) Paraphrasing verses 14,15, a powerful ruler surrounded and attacked a small city where only a few people lived. The enemy army was getting ready to break through the city walls. Thankfully, the city was saved because

of the wisdom of a poor person who dwelt there; yet, since he was poor, he and his wisdom were soon forgotten.

The account does not tell us what the poor man did in his wisdom to save the small city. As the Key Verse points out, however, this wisdom was evidently much more powerful than the strength of the ruler who made the attack. Unfortunately, this wisdom was despised from the standpoint that it came from a mere poor man and quickly faded from memory. Yes, fallen man has little inclination to remember the wise words of a poor and insignificant person, even when it is to their benefit. Such should not be the case, however, with God’s people. True spiritual wisdom, based on God’s Word, should always be heeded and remembered, regardless of the

instrument used to dispense it. As the account further states, “The words of wise men are heard [by God] in quiet more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools. Wisdom is better than weapons of war.”—vss. 17,18

Continuing our lesson in Ecclesiastes chapter 10, we find several other references to the superiority of true wisdom. “A wise man’s heart is at his right hand; but a fool’s heart at his left. Yea also, when he that is a fool walketh by the way, his wisdom faileth him, and he saith to every one that he is a fool.” (chap. 10:2,3) In somewhat veiled language, Solomon is stating here that those who have true wisdom will be led to do right. Those lacking wisdom will tend toward sin, and their lack of wisdom will be evident to others by the way they live.

Apostle James tells us, “The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.” (James 3:17) If this be the wisdom we pursue, it will of necessity lead toward holiness and a proper development of the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit.

In still another reference to wisdom, this verse from our lesson states, “If the iron be blunt, and he do not whet the edge, then must he put to more strength: but wisdom is profitable to direct.” (Eccles. 10:10) Interpreting Solomon’s words, he says that if you have an ax (an earthly implement) that is not sharp, it will take a lot more effort to get it to cut. However, wisdom from God, figuratively speaking, will always be sharp and never lose its edge.

We know that our chief source for knowing and understanding God’s wisdom is his Word, the Bible. Apostle Paul speaks of this in complete harmony with Solomon’s words, even using the metaphor of sharpness. He says in two separate instances, “Take . . . the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.” “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword.”—Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12 ■